



Children and Families at Risk Working Group

Meeting Minutes

October 27, 2011, 10:30am – 12:00pm

Voices for Illinois Children, Suite 1490, 208 South La Salle Street, Chicago, IL

Action Items:

1. Tracy Smith will contact CMAP to let them know about using language for the Commission's values statement.
2. John Egan will meet with DCFS to discuss the CACFP and SFSP exemption. He will then coordinate a meeting with Mark Haller, Tom Browning, Tracy Smith and Kelly Brasseur.

1. Attendance

In Person: Kathy Ryg (Voices for Illinois Children), Dawn Melchiorre (Voices for Illinois Children), Barb Karacic (Holy Family Food Pantry), Tracy Smith (Feeding Illinois), John Cheney Egan (DCFS), Allison Forrer (Feeding Illinois), Carissa Gomez (Feeding Illinois)

Phone: Barbara Rose (Bright Promises Foundation), Mark Haller (ISBE), Kelly Brasseur (Northern Illinois Food Bank), Tom Browning (Illinois Action for Children)

2. Debrief Chicago Public Schools breakfast visit and recent listening tour stops

- **School breakfast visit:** Several commissioners visited Roosevelt High School in the Albany Park neighborhood in Chicago. Commissioners observed children being given the option of selecting a hot or cold breakfast upon entering the building prior to the start of the school day. Students had their school ID scanned by kitchen staff if they received a meal which helped to make the process go quickly and cut down on paperwork and teacher obligation to count meals. The principal had worked hard to implement a good discipline program and that affected the success of the program.
- Preferred Meals and Chartwells are the two contractors that work with CPS to provide school meals. Majority of schools work with Chartwells. CPS bases the contractor for each school on their facilities.
- Success of this particular program came from:
 - i. Administered by school staff not teachers.
 - ii. Done prior to the first class period of the day.
 - iii. Students are given meals that are easy to eat at their locker in the morning.

- iv. Discipline and school culture promoted an environment that made breakfast an easy fit into the school day.
- **School Report Card Legislation:** Bill passed the Illinois House 10/26 to have a revised school report card. School climate metric that was developed by 60 parent focus groups. Looking to find a way to train parents and communities how to read the report card and use it to make decisions. Should consider adding something about school breakfast on the report card.
- Need to understand the disconnect between a program working well in CPS but not being understood by or communicated to other districts. Few communities outside of Chicago are utilizing school breakfast.
- **Challenges:**
 - i. Teachers having to administer the program.
 - ii. Children arriving to school early enough. Problematic for rural areas.
 - iii. Need to understand breakfast as part of the school day.
 - iv. To date there has not been a full public awareness campaign about school breakfast. Such a campaign could come through ISBE or No Kid Hungry Campaign. Would need to engage associations that are affiliated with schools (i.e. Principals Association). Messaging needs to directed at schools and communities.

3. Commission Meeting review: developing recommendations within framework categories

- This is a list of what we have started to build as recommendations under the headings on Optimize, Invest, Coordinate and Educate.
- Several of the recommendations, as expected, overlap with possible recommendations from the other working groups.
- Could be useful to frame the recommendations with the three “P’s.” – program, policy, and partnerships
- Suggested revisions to Children & Families at Risk Summary of Recommendations:
 - i. Increase participation in SNAP
 - 1. Relative caregivers
 - a. Investigate eligibility for relative caregivers to receive SNAP benefits for only the child. This currently is done with TANF. DCFS will not

deem a family foster parents if they have taken in a relative child that was not being abused or neglected.

b. For the childcare assistance you do not have to be a relative, as the assistance through DCFS or TANF requires that.

c. Allison and John will contact Dan Lesser to explore this program.

2. Children of non-eligible parents (immigrant)

ii. What is the opportunity to coordinate services in a continuum of care model? Could help to address “missed” community areas. Understand what the best level of coordination would for an area.

1. Kelly Brasseur related NIFB’s practice of mapping the community to understand need and where services are being located. NIFB does have quarterly meetings to discuss area issues and provide assistance. This is not the standard of practice for other food banks throughout the state. Throughout the state this practice could be run through food banks or through other models.

2. Better inform DHS as a place for people to learn about resources.

3. John Cheney Egan recommended the DCFS database. Very user friendly and a great place for information sharing. Possibility for the administrators to offer training to Chicago area providers. It is a case manager resource, not a tool for the general public. There is a concern about the public perception of using DCFS resources. United Way database is no longer as effective as an information clearinghouse.

4. John also brought IFindIt Chicago as a possible tool. Opportunity to reach out to them to share our resources and list them on their site.

iii. Look at ways we can support community gardens and local agriculture. Discuss with partners what their recommendations would be.

iv. Clarify issue around risk and CACFP/SFSP – risk associated with not being reimbursed for meals in the case of incorrect paperwork,

v.

4. Value statement discussion – CMAP Go To 2040 as starting point

- Language from CMAP document

- i. Every person in the seven-county Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning region will have access to quality, nutritious food. *Change language to reflect the entire state.*
- ii. No man, woman or child will be hungry.
- iii. Supplemental and emergency food systems will be customer focused and provide service with dignity.
- iv. There will be “no wrong door” for individuals and families in need of food assistance – meaning there will be multiple entry points for programs and services that will be client-centered as opposed to program-centered.
- v. Nutrition programs and services will be delivered collaboratively, in a streamlined, seamless fashion, regardless of whether they are federal, state, municipal or private in nature.

- Action: Should let CMAP know we are modeling after their work.

5. Discuss CACFP challenges and recent DCFS requirements with Kelly Brasseur (Northern Illinois Food Bank)

- Refer to “Children_and_Families_at_Risk_SFSP CACFP Discussion” document for details of this issue.
- As a result of this rule several programs to drop out of the program because of the administrative requirements. Also there is concern that because of this process sites could then be required to be licensed through DCFS.
- John Egan provided insight that DCFS did an audit of all exempt programs with background checks. Suggested that these issues are coming out of several policies that are running into each other. Next step would be to speak with someone in Licensing in DCFS. Tom Browning and Mark Haller suggested speaking with Alexia Carlisle and Mary Thomas. ISBE did make some attempt in March to make the program run smoother.
- This a one-time process to declare that a location is exempt. Mark will provide a list of exemptions. The issue is that either the sponsoring organizations will be liable or it is DCFS.
- Next steps: John recommended a meeting between Kelly, Tracy and Mark and then other DCFS personnel to work through issues.
- Other recommendations or suggestions for moving forward:

- i. Currently the CACFP and SFSP programs run on two separate applications. ISBE is trying within the year to make this a common application that will carryover for different services.
- ii. Kelly would also suggest that trainings are program specific.
- iii. Is there a better way to have shared risk between ISBE and sponsoring organizations? This is a USDA issue that affects SFSP in particular.

6. Set November meeting date: Carissa and Dawn will work to coordinate.

Children and Families at Risk Working Group
Summary Recommendations
Organized within Recommendation Framework
October 27, 2011

Optimize:

- Increase participation in federal child nutrition programs:
 - School breakfast
 - Summer Food Service Program
 - Expansion of afterschool/weekend programs
- Expand use of Community Eligibility Option for free/reduced school lunch
- Increase participation in SNAP - half of SNAP recipients are children
 - Focus on access for at-risk children such as those in a relative caregiver household, or children of ineligible undocumented immigrant parents

Coordinate:

- Connect families eligible for free/reduced school lunch with SNAP Outreach statewide (consider outreach model used by Chicago Public Schools)
- Coordination of access to data sources between administrators like ISBE and DHS
 - Look at Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map (IECAM) as a model for data sharing within the child nutrition programs
 - Consider using and strengthening existing resources such as the DCFS database or IFindIt Chicago
 - Equip local DHS offices as a resource for constomers
- Provide a continuum of options, feeding entire families and not just children for discrete periods of time
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Invest:

- Consider backpack and other programs for school closure days, holidays, and rural areas
 - Look to demonstration projects as a way to test innovative solutions
 - Michigan is testing EBT card provides extra benefits to feed children in the summer. Could be good for rural and below 50% communities.
- Incentivize and support participation of SFSP and CACFP sponsors

Educate:

- Promote ISBE training workshops and similar training toolkits. Possibly connect these trainings with annual food bank agency conferences, and events like the Feeding Illinois Annual Anti-Hunger Conference (March 2012).
- Improve information and process for potential sites and sponsors about the requirements for application and administration of programs like SFSP and CACFP
 - Address paperwork burden and USDA regulations around the SFSP and CACFP that prevent seamless participation in both programs
 - Work to mitigate risk of lost meal reimbursement
- Support use of local agriculture and community gardens as means for nutrition and agricultural education for kids